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O 260919Z MAY 09 ZDK PER NUMEROUS SVCS  
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3857  
INFO RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE  
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE  
RHMFISS/CJTF HOA

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 000687

DEPT FOR SE GRATION, S/USSES, AF A/S CARSON, AF/E  
NSC FOR MGAVIN  
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN  
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINS](#) [EAID](#) [UNSC](#) [KPKO](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: DDR IN SOUTHERN SUDAN: READY OR NOT, HERE IT COMES

11. (SBU) SUMMARY. Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) in southern Sudan, which begins June 10, is expected to reduce the payroll of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). The joint United Nations-Government of Southern Sudan DDR program is unlikely, however, to ensure that all demobilized combatants transition to gainful employment in civilian life, posing potential security risks. These risks could be aggravated if last-minute program arrangements undermine the effectiveness of DDR assistance. END SUMMARY.

#### LAUNCHING THE PROGRAM

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12. (U) After repeated delays, the first-ever disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) program in Sudan's South will begin June 10 with SPLA combatants stationed in Central Equatoria State. This follows the launch in February and April of DDR programs in the Three Areas and will be followed in coming months by program launches in Jonglei and Eastern Equatoria States, continuing a staggered state-by-state schedule that donors expect will process approximately 108 ex-combatants per day across the South. Underscoring the importance of DDR to the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS), GOSS President Salva Kiir Mayardit is expected to speak at the kick-off in Juba.

13. (U) Although the ultimate target for SPLA demobilization is 90,000 participants, the focus prior to the 2011 referendum will be on the approximately 35,000 men and women identified by the SPLA as belonging to "Special Needs Groups." These include disabled and elderly soldiers and women and children non-combatants affiliated with the SPLA. (Note: Whether able-bodied female combatants are also being targeted for demobilization remains unclear.)

#### FROM GIVING UP THE GUN TO GUIDANCE COUNSELING

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14. (U) Upon presenting their weapons to the SPLA, participants will be registered, if they are not already; receive a DDR card, medical screening, and possible treatment; and face a demobilization and reintegration briefing. At this point, disarmed participants are removed from the SPLA payroll, given cash and a reinsertion voucher redeemable for three months' worth of food for a family of five, and provided UNMIS transport to the state of their reintegration.

15. (U) Eight weeks after demobilization, participants are to meet with a Southern Sudan DDR Commission (SSDDRC) case officer in their chosen state to receive guidance on choosing a reintegration support package and seeking ultimate placement or starting a business. The choices of six-month support packages include agricultural training, seeds, and tools; training in small business skills; vocational training; and formal education. Only those choosing formal education will receive a small cash stipend, meaning that the reinsertion grant may be the last direct cash assistance many

participants receive.

HIGH EXPECTATIONS, LATE PREPARATION, NO JOBS  
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16. (SBU) UNDP consultant Betsy Lippman (protect), recently hired to produce the UN's strategy for the reintegration ("R") component, stressed that unrealistic participant expectations make it crucial to clarify in the demobilization briefing that the scope of the assistance is limited. To ensure that participants receive consistent messages, UNDP is developing a uniform script for its staff and those of the SSDDRC, as well as providing answers to anticipated questions based on feedback from the DDR program in the Three Areas.

17. (SBU) Poor planning by UN DDR, sloth-like donor response, and GOSS-generated delays exacerbated by Vice President Riek Machar's on-again, off-again support for the DDR concept have caused many key provisions for the DDR program to be made at the last minute. UNDP commissioned its reintegration strategy only one month before the disarmament and demobilization process is to begin, and it has yet to complete the hiring of state-level reintegration case workers. UNMIS has not completed the construction of the DDRC state offices where participants are to present themselves. (COMMENT: The overarching sequencing of the DDR process will likely create further confusion; while the disarmament and demobilization process can be staggered from state to state, participants choose where they are reintegrated. This in effect means that all ten states must be ready to receive participants only weeks after the Central Equatoria process begins in Juba - a virtual impossibility.) Finally, donor funding is in hand for slightly fewer than half of the 35,000 participants. The South's DDR program costs USD 1,750 per

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ex-combatant, making this one of the most expensive DDR programs in Africa. Participants will only receive some of that sum in direct assistance, however, well below the average USD 175 per month that an SPLA private receives in his pay packet.

18. (SBU) The most formidable obstacle, though, is an expected shortage of gainful opportunities for participants to use their newly-acquired civilian skill sets. UN agencies are currently conducting opportunity assessments, but Lippman and other UN DDR colleagues are concerned that the South's economy will be unable to absorb many of the participants. Lippman expressed further concern that potential implementing partners -- NGOs currently in place and providing social services or livelihood assistance -- may not even have sufficient capacity to provide training to all participants in all areas of reintegration. Lippman noted that mapping is ongoing to identify such gaps.

MDTF: POTENTIAL SILVER BULLET?  
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19. (SBU) COMMENT. The Government of Southern Sudan is keen to reduce the burden of meeting the SPLA's payroll and to normalize its army by demobilizing soldiers who lack combat readiness. It is unclear, though, that the South's economy offers sufficient reintegration opportunities to absorb DDR-assisted participants. An underlying concern remains the extent to which these participants may become restive and pose a security threat if they are unable to find a reliable living after exhausting their reinsertion grant. Acting Consul General and USAID Deputy Director for Southern Sudan continue to encourage, along with the World Bank and UN Humanitarian Coordinator, for MDTF participants to direct a currently unspent US\$220 million in funds to the "R" process. MDTF donor nations continue to resist direct budget support to the GOSS because of its high military expenditure rates. With ninety-three percent of the SPLA's budget going to salaries, the MDTF's European donors have a panacea at hand - if only they apply the creative and proactive means to mobilize the funds already at their disposal. END COMMENT.

ASQUINO